



AUSTRALIA

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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 16th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Djibouti

Statement by Australia

Australia commends Djibouti for the legislative council elections it held in February 2013 and welcomes the Government's invitation of the African Union Election Observation Mission (AU-EOM) to oversee the election. However, Australia is concerned by the post-electoral violence of late February 2013 and allegations of politically-motivated arrests in the wake of the violence. Australia supports the preliminary findings outlined in the joint statement of the election observer missions dated 24 February 2012, and **recommends that Djibouti take appropriate action to guarantee freedom of expression, association and assembly – including by allowing the participation of opposition parties and civil society.**

Australia acknowledges the work of the Government of Djibouti in criminalising female genital mutilation and notes the awareness campaigns the Government has conducted. However, Australia remains deeply concerned by the ongoing prevalence of FGM in Djibouti. Australia is cognisant of the problems posed by the non-reporting of this crime and urges the Government of Djibouti to develop institutions and procedures that allow for victims to make complaints without fear of recrimination, so that investigations and prosecutions can commence. **Australia recommends the Government of Djibouti escalate its efforts to eliminate female genital mutilation and instigate relevant legal reforms to facilitate effective prosecutions.**

Speaker: HE Mr Peter Woolcott

(or Ms Lauren Stasinowsky)